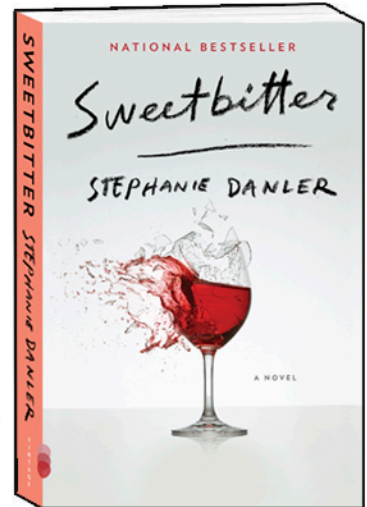




BITTERSWEET CHOCOLATE CAKE AND POULSARD

“Taste,” Chef said, “is all about balance. The sour, the salty, the sweet, the bitter. Now your tongue is coded. A certain connoisseurship of taste, a mark of how you deal with the world, is the ability to relish the bitter, to crave it even, the way you do the sweet.” (p. 17)

This is one of twenty-two-year-old Tess's first lessons in taste after she secures a coveted waitressing position at a celebrated downtown Manhattan restaurant. Her culinary education will serve her well not only in her new role, but in every aspect of her life, from her budding romance to the friendships she forms along the way.



To immerse yourself more deeply in the *Sweetbitter* world, we recommend you and your book club try out this recipe for bittersweet chocolate cake, along with a Poulsard wine, a pairing which you can find on page 269 of the novel. Let the richness of the cake, combined with the bitterness of the wine, remind you and your reading group to relish all the flavors of life.

INGREDIENTS:

8 ounces bittersweet (not unsweetened) or semisweet chocolate, chopped	4 large eggs, separated
4 tablespoons (1 1/4 sticks) unsalted butter, cut into pieces	2/3 cup sugar
	3 1/2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
	Powdered sugar

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 325°F. Line bottom of 9-inch-diameter cake pan with 2-inch-high sides with waxed paper. Butter sides of pan and paper. Dust pan with flour. Melt chocolate and butter in top of double boiler over simmering water, stirring until smooth. Cool slightly.

Whisk yolks and sugar in large bowl until pale yellow. Mix in flour, then chocolate mixture. Using electric mixer, beat whites in another bowl until stiff but not dry. Fold into chocolate mixture. Pour batter into prepared pan. Bake until toothpick inserted into center comes out with only a few moist crumbs attached, about 25 minutes. Cool completely in pan on rack. Run small sharp knife around sides of pan to loosen cake. Turn cake out onto platter and cool. (Can be prepared 8 hours ahead. Cover with cake dome and let stand at room temperature.) Sift powdered sugar over cake and serve.